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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/856,502	09/25/2001	Tetsuharu Tanaka	107348-00119	5501

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EXAMINER

BOYD, JENNIFER A

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

1771

DATE MAILED: 07/13/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/856,502

Applicant(s)

TANAKA ET AL.

Examiner

Jennifer A. Boyd

Art Unit

1771

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 01 May 2006.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1,6 and 13-15 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1,6 and 13-15 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Amendment

1. The Applicant's Amendments and Accompanying Remarks, filed May 1, 2006, have been entered and have been carefully considered. Claims 1, 6 and 13 – 15 are pending. The invention as currently claimed is unpatentable for reasons herein below.
2. The text of those sections of Title 35, U.S. Code not included in this action can be found in a prior Office action.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3. Claims 1, 6 and 14 – 15 remain rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Fujita et al. (US 4,781,976) in view of Yoshimi et al. (US 4,721,642). The details of the rejection can be found in the previous Office Action. The rejection is maintained.
4. Claim 13 remains rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Fujita (US 4,781,976) and Yoshimi et al. (US 4,721,642), as applied above, and further in view of Hutchinson et al. (GB 2,331,525). The details of the rejection can be found in the previous Office Action. The rejection is maintained.

Response to Arguments

5. Applicant's arguments filed November 7, 2005 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

Applicant argues that Fujita fails to teach that the foam layer 3 or the lower layer body

comprises a carbon black filler. Applicant argues that the carbon black is a filler for the high polymerization PVC but does not provide a teaching of carbon black for the low polymerization PVC. Although, Fujita does not specifically teach certain fillers in the paragraph discussing the foam layer, Fujita does teach that the conventional additives include fillers such as carbon black (column 2, lines 50 –53). In regards to the foam layer, Fujita teaches uses conventional additives such as fillers. It would have been obvious to use the carbon black for the filler for the foam layer based on this teaching.

Applicant argues that Yoshimi fails to cure the deficiencies in Fujita with respect to claims 1 and 6. Applicant argues that the piles 5 in Yoshimi are not comparable to a sueded, roughened surface having pluralities of recesses and projections, at least because the piles are not a roughened surface, but a coated surface. It appears that the Applicant is arguing that the process of making the sueded surface of the present invention is different than the process of making the sueded surface of Yoshimi. It should be noted that even though product-by-process claims are limited by and defined by the process, determination of patentability is based on the product itself. The patentability of a product does not depend on its method of production. If the product in the product-by-process claim is the same or an obvious variant from a product of the prior art, the claim is unpatentable even though the prior product was made by a different process. *In re Thorpe*, 227 USPQ 964, 966 (Fed. Cir. 1985). The burden has been shifted to the Applicant to show unobvious differences between the claimed product and the prior art product. *In re Marosi*, 218 USPQ 289, 292 (Fed. Cir. 1983). In this case, Yoshimi teaches a surface having a flocked pile or a skin of suede-like synthetic leather for the purpose of decoration and protection (column 1, lines 1 – 25). Yoshimi teaches that the panel comprises a plurality of pile

with lengths of 0.4 mm long on the panel surface (column 3, lines 15 – 30). The Examiner equates this to Applicant's "sueded, roughened surface having pluralities of recess and projections". The burden is upon the Applicant to demonstrate material differences between the products.

Applicant argues that Hutchinson fails to cure the deficiencies of Fujita and Yoshimi in regards to claim 13. Please see arguments above.

Conclusion


6. **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).


A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than **SIX MONTHS** from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Jennifer A. Boyd whose telephone number is 571-272-1473. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday thru Friday (8:30am - 6:00pm).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Terrel Morris can be reached on 571-272-1478. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.


Jennifer Boyd
July 5, 2006


W. C. Ruddock
Primary Examiner
Tech Center 1700